



HAMILTON COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

317 OAK STREET, SUITE 302
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE 37403
PHONE: (423) 209-6900 FAX (423) 209-6901

MINUTES

LEPC Meeting, November 14, 2001

A meeting of the Hamilton County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) was held November 14, 2001 at the Barnhill's Buffet, 2020 Gunbarrel Rd., Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Those in attendance were:

Bruce Garner, Chairman, Chattanooga Fire Department
Wayne Stuntz, Secretary/Treasurer, Hamilton County Emergency Services
Jamie Farrow, Vice Chairman, Conagra Poultry
David Darnell, Vice Chairman, BASF Corporation
Dane Creel, Vice Chairman, Kraft Foods
Richard Twitchell, Vice Chairman, Consultant
Bob Diehl, Electric Transit Vehicle Institute
Steven Littell, McKee Foods
Mike Edwards, McKee Foods
Michael Thompson, SYN AIR Corporation
Denny Cloud, DuPont Company
John Isenberg, DuPont Company
Don Ward, DuPont Company
Mile Poe, SOFIX Corporation
Eric Helquist, Fuels Marketing/JAT Oil
Chuck Nichols, Chattanooga Fire Department
Tim Arnold, TN State Guard
Charles Chauncey, RACES
Charles Goodner, RACES
Clark Bingham, BASF Corporation
Nancy Kuhns, CARTA

Those in attendance: (Cont.)

Shirley Green, CARTA
Kim Dalton, Tennessee American Water Company
Lori Bachus, Tennessee American Water Company
Mark Anderson, MD, Bio-Terrorism Task Force—Panelist
Capt. Skip Vaughn, Chattanooga Police Dept, Special Ops—Panelist
Capt. Robert Hadden, TDOT Commercial Vehicle Enforcement—Panelist
Caroline Williams, League of Women Voters
Shirley Wilson, Visitor
Marcia McEvoy, RN, Erlanger Medical Center
Bill Allen, Regional Planning Agency
Dusty Rominger W.R. Grace
Carrie Hunt, W.R. Grace
Garish Patel, ALCO Chemical
Chris Young, Atlanta Gas Light Company
Tyson Chandler, Mueller Company
Bill Douglas, American Red Cross
Pat Freeney, American Red Cross
Randy Snorek, Electric Power Board
George Sivils, DuPont Company
Terry Million, DuPont Company
Roger Forgey, Erlanger Medical Center
John Bennett, JIT Terminal, Inc.
Brian D. Lopez-Cepero, Chattanooga Police Dept.
Tim McDonald, City of Chattanooga Stormwater

Chairman Bruce Garner called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance. Mr. Garner advised the committee that Vice Chairman Larry Martin's mother passed away and would not be in attendance today. He expressed his condolences Mr. Martin and his family. The Chairman also said that Don Allen, Director of Hamilton County Emergency Services, and Bill Tittle, Chief of Emergency Management, could not be in attendance due to a prior commitment. He said they truly wanted to attend this meeting, but could not get out of prior commitments. Mr. Garner also said that Channel 3 Eyewitness News recently broadcast a two-part series on terrorism, specifically bio-terrorism and chemical terrorism. He said the chemical terrorism story included interviews with himself and Vice Chairman David Darnell, who offered excellent comments on the safety measures implemented at BASF since September 11.

Old Business

The Chairman told the committee that at this point he would have asked the committee if they had received the minutes of the September 19 meeting, but apologized to the committee saying that he had not had a chance to review them before the meeting. He assured the committee that the minutes for this meeting as well as the last meeting would be sent as soon as possible to all members.

The Chairman then asked the Treasurer go over the LEPC Financial Report. Mr. Stuntz distributed to each member in attendance a copy of the report and merely stressed significant transactions since the last report to include the current balance. A copy of the financial report is a matter of record and will be filed with the minutes for this meeting.

The Chairman then asked the committee if there was any other old business to discuss and there was none.

New Business

The Chairman then reminded everyone of the importance of the meeting—that this public forum was a special meeting of the Hamilton County Local Emergency Planning Committee and was actually prompted by a request from local emergency officials to address security concerns in our community.

Mr. Garner said that to address these concerns, the LEPC put together this public forum with opportunities for people in our business and manufacturing communities as well as private citizens, to find out just what activities and contingency plans are being implemented locally.

The Chairman then introduced the distinguished panelists who would address these concerns. They were: Captain Skip Vaughn – Director of Special Operations with the Chattanooga Police Dept.; Dr. Mark Anderson – Chairman of the local medical association's Bio-terrorism Task Force; Tactical Services Chief Chuck Nichols with the Chattanooga Fire Dept.; Officer Robert Hadden with the Tennessee Department of Safety – Commercial Enforcement; and Mr. David Darnell – Safety and Security Manager, BASF Corporation.

The Chairman said that since September 11, 2001, local law enforcement, fire and emergency agencies have been besieged with calls from concerned – even frightened

citizens. Could our local industries be a target for terrorist attack of some kind? How concerned should we be with the Anthrax threat? These questions and more were presented to the panel of local experts out of concern for the recent threats and attacks upon citizens of the United States.

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Summarizing their presentations, Captain Vaughn said that the threat of terrorism is real and companies here in Hamilton County should review all of their security procedures. He said the police department would help with advice, if asked. Chief Nichols said members of the fire department's hazardous materials team have received some specialized training since September 11. Even though firefighters have responded to numerous reports of "suspicious letters," nothing hazardous, such as anthrax, has been found so far. Dr. Anderson said local medical professionals have taken some measures to increase readiness for a bio-terrorism attack, but there's more work to be done. Officer Hadden said his department is on the alert for terrorists who might use tractor-trailer rigs, tankers and other vehicles for terrorist attacks. He said his officers not only enforce highway regulations, but also offer advice on how to stay in compliance and what to look for when it comes to terrorist activities. Mr. Darnell said BASF has taken a number of measures to protect its facilities from terrorism – some you can see, and some you cannot. He said it's important to avoid complacency, because every facility in Hamilton County is a potential target.

It was a very productive panel discussion, with many questions from the membership. Wrapping up the session, which lasted nearly two hours, the Chairman thanked the panelists for sharing such valuable information to the membership. Mr. Garner said that when it comes to safety and security, corporate members of the LEPC had an excellent reputation. The Chairman said that it's the companies which use or store hazardous materials, but are never heard from, that concern emergency responders the most. Hopefully, he said, we can get more of those companies connected with the LEPC in the near future.

At the conclusion of the public forum, a package of guidance and resource documents were distributed to those in attendance to assist them in their efforts to improve safety and security for their companies and agencies. If you or your company would like to receive one of these information packages to help address these types of concerns, please contact the Hamilton County LEPC by calling (423) 495-1743.

The Chairman said a notice would be sent out with details on the next meeting in January. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by those present.

